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NEWS RELEASE

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Over 12,000 persons in the Caribbean to benefit from a Shrimp and Ground fish Project



Fishers actively involved in Shrimp Trawling

30 May 2022, Bridgetown, Barbados – On 29 April, a group of more than 70 persons representing fisher-folk, regional fisheries bodies, government, civil society organizations, private sector and academia participated virtually in a regional workshop for the preparation phase of a major project, which will be implemented by The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Global Environment Facility's (GEF) is providing grant funding of USD 1,776,484 to implement the project with an estimated USD 7,813,521 in co-financing in cash and in-kind co-financing coming from the fisheries related private sector and non-governmental organizations totalling USD 9,590,005. The “Enhancing capacity for the adoption and implementation of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) in the shrimp and ground fish fisheries of the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem Project”, is set to benefit 12,000 persons in Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, and expected to start in the first quarter of 2023 with a duration of 48 months.

FAO organized and hosted the workshop in collaboration with the fisheries agencies in Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago with four specific objectives. These objectives included (1) to present the GEF accepted project concept, (2) to outline the project preparation process, (3) to identify key sources of information and stakeholders and partners to support drafting of the project's full proposal and (4) to present a work plan for the development of the project document and agree on roles and responsibilities. The discussions largely focused on the identification of government focal points, the selection of target fisheries and the identification of key stakeholders associated with target fisheries for each project.

Marcelo Vasconcellos, FAO Lead Technical Officer of the project indicated that the aim of the project is to advance adoption and implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries EAF in the shrimp and ground fish fisheries in the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem. The countries of Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago will be participating in the project which is intended to improve 5,982,900 hectares of marine habitat, contribute to moving 22,000 tonnes of marine fisheries to more sustainable levels, and benefit 8,000 males and 4,000 females including fisher folk, fishing communities, government agencies, relevant public and private sector, civil society, and academia.

The North Brazil Shelf is a Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) that extends from the Caribbean Sea, in Central America, to the Parnaiba River in Brazil. The area supports one of the most important export-oriented shrimp fisheries in the world including ground fish resources, which have a wide distribution range and export value. The area is dominated by the runoff of large rivers, including the Amazon and Orinoco, and by the intense disturbance of sediment transport, tides and currents. The seabed is formed mainly by mud in shallow water, and by sand, mud, and gravel in deeper water.

During his opening remarks at workshop, Zorindra Arjune, Deputy Fisheries Director, Fisheries Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries in Suriname stated, "This project is totally in line with what we have formulated in our Fisheries Management Plan. We are very glad that this project will certainly contribute to better data collection which is very important for all of us when we look at what is being required by market states as well as international organisations."

The project components also supports the country's implementation of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme priorities. These priorities includes enhancing or developing national and sub-regional EAF-based fisheries management information systems, strengthening national and sub-regional

governance arrangements for EAF fisheries management. Other key areas are encouraging small-scale fisheries to adopt more sustainable fishing practices through new business opportunities, and supporting knowledge management and lesson learning.

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